

**Children's Mental Health and Substance Abuse  
Early Childhood Sub-Committee  
Meeting Notes  
August 5, 2005**

*1. Agreement to commit to the work of the committee  
Discussion:*

Concerns were raised about:

- Issues of sustainability and maintaining the infrastructure once the life of the grant is complete
- Lack of focus on prevention and the promotion of optimum mental health as part of a holistic approach
  - A lack of focus on education, awareness and prevention led participants to recommend inclusion of a third charge that focuses on identifying future focus areas that need to be addressed.
- Disconnect between the stated charge and the stated purpose
  - The charge is narrow and the purpose is broad.
- The phrases "at risk for" and "serious mental illness" were not acceptable language to most participants.
  - It was recommended that "at risk for" be deleted if it is not required by the funding source.

**The Committee recommends the following changes to the Initial Charge:**

1. Develop strategies for early identification of children ... (at risk – only if needed for grant purposes) experiencing social, emotional or behavioral problems and services to address their needs.
2. Work with the "Perinatal Depression Screening Grant" to develop system strategies for screening, referral and treatment for perinatal depression.
3. Identify future areas of focus in the area of early childhood mental health.

*2. Who is missing from the group (are there important gaps in expertise or influence represented in the group as currently constituted)?*

- People involved in women's health
- Clinical and medical
- Early childhood practitioners
- Legal
- School psychologist - education
- Infants and pre-school children – outstanding program – Child Respite Care Center, Inc.
- Consumer – that has gone through a program with a child
- Woman who has experienced perinatal depression
- Pre-mature infant specialists
- Foster care parents and recipients

- Special education director – early childhood special education – statewide organization of special educators
- Faith-based community – parish nurses  
Developmental disability – dual diagnosis

The group discussed balancing the size of the group with the need to involve representative stakeholders. The general consensus of the group was that a number of people can be representative of more than one constituency and that **other avenues of stakeholder involvement should be explored rather than adding to the size of this group.**

### *3. Are there gaps in expertise and knowledge?*

The range of knowledge around the table varied. Key reports, state data and information on best practices should be shared with all committee members. This includes information regarding current system initiatives, funding streams and planning processes that have taken place in the past.

To fill the gap, each committee member is asked to share the data/reports/information they have access to with other members. It was decided by consensus that members could send their information to Denise Bulling at the Public Policy Center and that it will be reviewed and made available to committee members at the next meeting. Any information that needs to be shared prior to the meeting date should be noted when you send it in to Denise. Committee members bringing hard copies of reports/documents to the next meeting should let Denise know in advance what they plan to bring.

**SEND ALL INFORMATION TO DENISE BY AUGUST 20, 2005**

*Send materials to:*

Denise Bulling

[dbulling@nebraska.edu](mailto:dbulling@nebraska.edu)

or mail to Denise at:

Public Policy Center

121 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Ste 303

Lincoln, NE 68588-0228

### *4. What additional information is needed to complete the task?*

See above.

### *5. What should be the operating agreements for this group?*

There was general consensus that there should be **no proxies at meetings** that committee members cannot attend. These are public meetings that others can sit in on, so if you are not able to be at the meeting, **you could send someone to observe and augment information** available in meeting minutes/notes.

We should have a combination of face to face and technology meetings.

There was some consideration given to meeting approximately once a month – though some of the work may be done by smaller work groups which report back to the larger group.

6. *To what mutual expectations should group members hold each other accountable (e.g., meeting attendance, communication, advocating agreement to others)?*

Group members recognized that mutual commitment to the committee work was essential to successful completion of the charge.

7. *How will this group make decisions? (e.g., consensus, majority voting, majority/minority reports)*

The group agreed that **consensus**, if at all possible, would be the preference of those in attendance. But, this requires that we need to always ask for the opinions of those who disagree. Our disagreements need to be voiced at the table.

8. *How will this committee be structured organizationally to best do the work (e.g., form work groups to focus on specific issues)?*

General discussion about division of work by charge or by task resulted in a decision to defer dividing out until after the next meeting.

**A large group meeting to review data and provide a similar foundation/philosophy will be held in September 2005.**

A subgroup agreed to work with the PPC to pull together the agenda and help make decisions about how to frame the next meeting. Those persons were: Carol Fichter, Barb Jackson, Gay McTate, Tanya Rasher-Miller, and Paula Eurek.

9. *What process should be used to complete the charge (e.g., meetings, phases, tasks, timelines)?*

Note: The second charge for this grant is the entire charge for the perinatal screening grant with very different timelines. This reality raised a question about how the charge of this grant and the work of the perinatal grant might be coordinated, so that there is not duplication of effort. The work of this committee may be the catalyst for the initial strategies for the perinatal grant.

10. *How will we know if we are successful?*

11. *Next meeting:*

It was suggested that there be a half day large group gathering and a half day for small group work, although it may be difficult to get through all of the background information in a half day. For those who are driving in, we need to make the meeting worth the investment of time. It is the preference of the group that the meeting begins at 9:00 and end about 3:00. Two dates were suggested – September 9<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>.

Those who aren't here will be polled to determine the largest number of people who can attend on either date, recognizing that some may not be available. The next meeting will be in Lincoln, location to be announced. It would be helpful if those who are working to plan the next meeting would also suggest a schedule for all of the next meetings so that these dates can get on calendars.

Communication of information and associated due dates for receipt of information as well as next meeting dates with times and locations will be sent out to everyone on the mailing list.

This is a “supported effort” – no one should feel that they are not able to come to the meetings because of personal costs. There are funds for travel and arrangements that can be made for telecommunications.